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A REPUBLICAN VIEW OF THE PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN.

BY GENERAL CHARLES HENRY GROSVENOR.

IF any one supposes that the Republican party will inaugurate the campaign of 1900 by a defensive platform or by defensive policies, he will learn a lesson in politics which will be valuable to him in the future. A party which has enjoyed two years of power, with the executive and both branches of the legislative body in unison with its purposes, ought to have so conducted its action as to justify an aggressive campaign against the enemy, rather than an apologetic campaign in defense of itself. The Republican party this year stands in that position. There is not one act of the administration of William McKinley that challenges, requires or will have at the hands of his intelligent friends a defense or apology. Such a course would be unnecessary. The achievements in every branch of governmental effort have been without parallel in the history of political administration in this country; and the arrows of criticism, which may be hurled against it for partisan purposes, will fail of effect and fall splintered and ineffective at the feet of the Republican administration. A distinguished representative in Congress, wise, sagacious and clear-headed, has formulated a platform which, while it is not, perhaps, a model of political phrasing, covers more ground than any like number of words probably have ever covered, and which would be a proper, complete and exhaustive platform for the Republicans of 1900. It is as follows:

"Resolved, That the transition from deficits in peace to surpluses in war; from bond issuing to bond paying; from hopeless farmers to happy farmers; from men hunting jobs to jobs hunting men; from soup houses to banquet tables; from poverty to prosperity; is not the result of accident or chance, or famines in India, but is the result of having a party in power that knows how to run the country and command its confidence."

The Republican party came into power in 1897 in the executive department of the government, and in the House of Representatives, and with a public sentiment so potential and irresistible in its effect that it practically carried into co-operation with it a Democratic-Populistic majority in the Senate. It may be said in a few words, for it needs no elaboration and no statistical tables, that the condition in this country on the election-day of 1896 was more deplorable than at any other period following the American Revolution. These are strong words. They are true words. There may have been a greater percentage of poverty in the colonies, when they had just become States, during the period of confederation and before the adoption of the Constitution; but there never was such a condition of horror and doubt and uncertainty and fear as there was on the day when Mr. McKinley was elected President of the United States.

Let us summarize it briefly. There was more idle labor than ever had been known before. There were more idle spindles, mills, factories and shops than had been known before. Foreign trade was falling off. Home markets had been destroyed. Confidence was to be found nowhere. Hunger, nakedness, fear, disaster, trouble were to be encountered everywhere.

I cannot so well indicate the nature of the situation which existed then as by inserting here an extract from the great speech of Senator Wolcott, of Colorado, in assuming the chair at the temporary organization of the National Convention. I feel under obligations to him for the authority he has given me to use this extract, and I point to it as a most wonderfully condensed description of this deplorable era in our country's history.

"In the four years preceding Mr. Cleveland's Administration we had paid \$260,000,000 of the national debt; he added \$230,000,000 to its burdens. He found a tariff act, bearing the name of his successor and our President, fitted to meet the requirements of our necessary expenditures, to furnish the needed protection to our farmers and manufacturers, and to insure the steady and remunerative employment of those who labor. Instead of permitting manufacture and commerce that repose and stability of law which are essential for working out economic conditions, he at once recommended violent and radical changes in revenue and tariff provisions, recommendations which his party in Congress proceeded partially and disastrously to execute. The appalling result of his policy is still fresh in the memory of millions who suffered from it. In four years the country witnessed some 60,000 commercial failures, with liabilities aggregating more than \$900,000,000. One hundred and seventy-seven railroads, with a mileage of

45,000 miles, or twice the circle of the globe, and with securities amounting to nearly \$3,000,000,000, were unable to meet their interest charges and passed into the hands of Receivers. More than 170 national banks closed their doors, with liabilities reaching \$70,000,000; wool and all farm products which tariffs could affect, lost tens of millions in value; farm mortgages were foreclosed by thousands throughout the Great West; our agricultural exports shrunk in value; the balance of trade which had been in our favor turned ruinously against us; the National Treasury was depleted of its gold reserve; our Government bonds were sold to syndicates at far below their market value before or since, and our steadily declining revenues were insufficient to meet the necessary expenses of conducting the Government. If capital alone had suffered, the loss would have been great, but not irremediable. Unfortunately those who rely upon their daily labor for their sustenance, and their families dependent upon them, constituting the great mass of the American people, were made to feel heaviest this burden of disaster. Nearly one-third of the laboring population of the United States were thrown out of employment, and men by thousands, able and willing to labor, walked the highways of the land clamoring for work or food.

"Four years of commercial misfortune enabled our industries to meet, in a measure, these changed and depressed conditions, but when President McKinley was inaugurated the country was in a state more deplorable than had existed for a generation."

During the last ten days of the contest of 1896, the Democratic party, through its leader, its candidate, its press, its stump orators, appealed to the lowest, worst element of the people of the country in a direction calculated, if not intended, to stimulate riot, bloodshed and revolution; and the sun went down, on the night before the election, upon a country whose hope for the future hung trembling in the balance of the ballot box. Every time the Chairman of the Democratic Committee in Chicago announced the probability of Mr. Bryan's election, the value of the property of the country fell by an amount greater than the whole cost of the Spanish war, including the conquest of the Philippines. This was due not alone to the financial features of the Democratic platform, nor to the threatened falling of prices and idleness of labor; it was not less due to the spirit of revolution that was fostered by the words spoken from the rear end of the "special" that traveled through the labor districts of the Middle West.

The laboring men of the country were told that they were being oppressed and downtrodden, and that money and plutocracy were weighing them down. Strange that the present Populist nominee should again invoke the word "Plutocrat!" They were

informed that the courts were revolutionary and oppressive in their character and decisions, and resistance to them was suggested. They were appealed to in language that would cost the men who uttered it imprisonment if spoken in public in many of the countries of the world. It was an appeal to the hungry; it was an appeal to the desperate; it was an appeal to the vicious; and the defeat of Mr. Bryan possibly alone saved the country from worse results than mere poverty. The farmer was told that the forty-five cents a bushel he was getting for his wheat would never be higher until silver was coined, at the ratio of 16 to 1, free in the mints of the country. They were told that money would never again be so plenty as it was then until free coinage was adopted as the remedy for the ills under which we labored. This was a seductive cry to the farmer upon whose farm rested a mortgage, which, with its accumulated interest, forbade the hope of payment. It was a seductive suggestion to the men who had struggled against the conditions that were surrounding them, and who saw no hope anywhere except through the operation of this fallacy which was paraded as a truth.

Out of this chaos of horror has come prosperity. Out of this hell of threatened revolution have come peace and order. Out of uncertainty have come security and confidence. It would be idle to waste the time of the reader in going into figures to show precisely what all this has resulted in. There is no transition recorded in the financial and industrial career of any nation that compares with it. Out of disaster has come daylight. Out of depression, expansion. The business interests of the country stand in a better attitude to-day than ever before in the history of the United States or than do those of any other country in the world. What has worked this miracle?

And now comes the issue of the campaign. We will charge that the troubles of 1896 came from the proposition of the Democratic party to destroy the integrity of the currency of the country. We will charge, and everybody will believe, that the substantial free-trade act of 1894 halted, blighted, overthrew and destroyed the industrial prosperity of the country. There can be no answer to these charges. The Democratic party must show that the deplorable condition of the country in 1896 can be accounted for in some other way before they can expect the support of the country.

We passed in 1892 from a condition which the President at that date, in December of that year, described to Congress as one of the most prosperous in all the history of America, and we plunged headlong into despair and darkness. This was the outcome of the Democratic administration. It was the result of Democratic politics. The substantial interests of the United States were then beggared by Democratic policy and purpose, for that dark period was the first time in the third of a century that followed 1861 when the Democratic party had control in all the branches of the government. The menace came with their election to power. The fruition of disaster followed quickly. If this were an old matter, statistics would be available and desirable. It is fresh in the memory of all, and does not need to be bolstered up by figures. The rising sun, shining forth in its glory, does not more quickly affect the surrounding conditions of frost or dew or mist than did the dawning of the McKinley administration, even three months before it came into power, affect the malign conditions which had resulted from Democratic administration. It was felt in the very atmosphere that better times were coming. Hope took the place of despair; enterprise took the place of apathy; and times began to recuperate slowly, very slowly, but as it now appears, certainly and surely.

Congress met on the 15th of March, and proceeded to redeem every pledge of the platform of 1896, and every promise that William McKinley had made. It passed the Dingley tariff law; and when that measure was under final consideration, and when an hour had been assigned to Mr. Bailey, of Texas, for the closing speech of the opposition, that distinguished young statesman, full of faith in his own party and in its policy, standing in his place upon the floor of the House of Representatives, conscious of his duty and responsibility as the leader of the Democratic minority, said, in effect, to the Republican majority: "Pass this bill, as you will. If it brings prosperity to the country, as you predict, there will be no occasion for us to nominate a candidate for President in 1900; but if you pass it and fail, and good times do not come, you need not nominate a candidate in 1900, for it will be a waste of time and effort."

Conscious that the financial affairs of the government were in an unsatisfactory condition, which had grown out of the easy methods of the Democratic majority which might have destroyed

the credit of the government, the House of Representatives promptly took up the financial question. A caucus committee of the Republicans of the fifty-fifth Congress who had been elected to the fifty-sixth Congress was appointed to prepare and present a bill to secure forever, while Republicanism dominated the country, a scheme of finance that would establish the gold standard intelligently and completely.

The tariff bill was passed and went into effect on the 24th of July, 1897. The financial bill followed in the early days of the next Congress, and the effect upon the country has been magical. It is too conspicuous to require elaboration in description. It is known and appreciated by everybody, and all the old Democratic ideas of a stone wall around the country, which would exclude foreign trade and limit us to a provincial market, have all been dissipated under a condition which will give to the American people in this fiscal year, now approaching its end, more than five hundred million dollars of a balance of trade in favor of the United States.

To-day the strongest argument, apparently, that can be made in favor of the election of the Democratic ticket, now already nominated by the Populists and doubtless to be indorsed by the Democrats, is that the Republican party by its wise legislation has put it beyond the power of the Democratic party to do any harm with the finances of the country, even though the candidate of the Populists should be elected. This is a strange suggestion. It is that the teeth of the viper have been drawn so that he can no longer be injurious, and that a party radically wrong in politics, unsound in every dogma, may now be safely trusted with political power, because the intelligence and patriotism of its opponents have deprived it of the power to destroy the interests of the country. This is the argument that is being cheerfully put forward by the Democratic press and by their allies of the independent persuasion, and that is heard on every hand.

The election of Mr. Bryan, as the situation stands to-day, would insure the election of a large Democratic majority in the House of Representatives. Drunk with success, and maddened by former defeats, this majority would at once deadlock the processes of the government, until their pet foibles could be put into operation. More than that, a sweeping victory for Mr. Bryan would insure Democratic control of the Senate not later than

the second half of his first term, and he, intrenched in power by one victory by this sort of argument, would be in a position to secure his re-election to a second term, and, with it, the control of both branches of Congress. Nor is this all. We have seen the dangers to the commercial interests of the country which were involved in the mere threat of Democratic success; and the very moment that Mr. Bryan and his school of politics should be elected to the executive branch, and a Democratic majority sent to the House, uncertainty, stagnation and trouble would come. Having "scotched" the snake, the people of the United States must see to it that, until his whole nature is changed, he must be kept out of power. Defeat Mr. Bryan and his Populistic party this year and there will grow up in this country a real Democratic party. The dogma of the free and unlimited coinage of silver would be forever buried out of sight. The Populistic branch of the Bryan party would be dissolved forever, and American politics would resume the position they occupied in former times.

The people of the United States make party platforms. A convention assembles and puts on paper an expression of the sentiment of the delegates; but, long before the frost of November, the people decide what it is they are interested in, and the single great issue comes to the front. In the present instance, the brief platform which has been placed at the head of this article will be the platform about which the people will be talking, and about which they will be voting. They understand this. They have felt the operation of the other doctrine, and they want no more of it.

Many years ago, the Prime Minister of England, when consulted by the King as to the probability of the Government's being repudiated at the elections, said to him: "Sire, the people of England will never repudiate the government, while wheat is a dollar a bushel." These words have come down to us through a long line of tradition, and it is probable that the words "dollar" and "bushel" were not used, but equivalent terms were doubtless the basis of the response of the Prime Minister.

The people of the United States, with the scars of 1892 and 1896 still fresh and bleeding, will not go back and place the party in power that did all that has been here so faintly described, while the present conditions remain and the present generation lives. Let the Democratic orators eliminate from their *répertoire*

all the small politics of imperialism and canteen and pension legislation, and all the little things that have come bubbling up out of the chaotic mind of the Democratic party, and let them train themselves from the start to answer two or three questions which will here be put.

First. What was it that precipitated this country from the high pinnacle of the commercial, industrial and financial prosperity of 1892 down into the pit in which we wallowed for four years?

Why was it that, out of the prosperous condition of 1892, we so soon found ourselves struggling in the mazes of doubt, uncertainty, and despair?

Again, why was it that the mere election of Mr. McKinley and a Republican Congress turned the tide the other way, and kept it rising, until the very mountain tops of the prosperity of 1892 are submerged in the oceans of prosperity of 1900?

Why was it that wages advanced, even before McKinley took his seat; and why was it that, from that day to this, there has been a steady growth of industrial, financial, and commercial prosperity throughout this land?

Answer these questions. Who did it? What did it? How was it done? What policy changed the conditions? What was it that restored confidence to the people? Answer these questions, and then you have satisfactorily answered the questions which the people of this country will put to the Democratic managers of 1900. The failure of the Democratic party to make successful answer will mark the coming final defeat of their whole organization.

But Mr. Bryan says that "money, trusts and imperialism" are to be the three great issues of the campaign of 1900. Imperialism! What a humbug! What an assault upon common sense! What a reflection upon the intelligence of the people of the United States, to talk about imperialism and militarism! Why, we are within less than a year of the time when we shall have only twenty-seven thousand soldiers of all arms, with a population of possibly eighty millions of people. Imperialism, in a government like this! Imperialism, in a government that has done more in the last two years to disseminate, among the fallen and the suffering, the blessings of liberty and justice and democracy, than has been done by all the other countries of the world

for a quarter of a century! Imperialism, by a political party that has established a democracy in the Sandwich Islands and given to those people a government liberal, free and stable! Imperialism, charged at the door of a party that has established a free government, with educational accompaniments and all the blessings of law and liberty, in the Island of Porto Rico, and that has taken out of the Treasury of the United States and handed over to that people a sum of money munificent in comparison with anything that they ever before enjoyed! Imperialism, charged against a government whose administration stands ready to-day to confer the blessings of free government upon the millions in the Philippine Islands, if they will only accept it in the spirit with which it is being tendered!

All these troubles and controversies have grown out of the acquisition of the Philippine Islands by the American people. At the close of the war with Spain, owing to the conditions of the Treaty of Paris, we entered upon a new field of operations. Nobody will deny this. We entered upon this field with fear and uncertainty. We entered upon it with all parties divided upon the great question of the wisdom of acquiring territory abroad and beyond our borders. There was doubt and misgiving in the minds of Republicans, whether it was the true policy of the American Government to acquire sovereignty over Porto Rico, Guam and the Philippines; and the whole question was submitted, under the provisions of the Constitution of the United States, to the representatives in the Senate of the American States for their determination. The treaty was brought into the Senate. The question before the Senate was the plain, straightforward question of ratification or non-ratification. The time for arresting the acquisition of foreign territory was then, and the hour when "imperialism" might have been forever eliminated out of American politics was then. It was a fair question, fairly submitted. Every Senator had the right and was charged with the duty to vote as he saw fit, and there was grave doubt and uncertainty as to what the result would be. About that time, some peculiar coincidences occurred in this country. One was an order from the War Department for a Nebraska regiment to proceed to Cuba and aid in the military operations there. Another was the sudden and at the time unexplained resignation of the distinguished colonel of this regiment; and the third was the pres-

ence of that colonel in the City of Washington, using his mighty influence and great eloquence to persuade the Senate of the United States to ratify the Treaty of Paris. And let it not be forgotten that his presence accomplished the work, and that but for him it would have failed. It will not be forgotten by the American people that, when the doors of the Senate were closed to all the people of the United States except the Senators, and they entered upon the solemn duty of voting to ratify or reject the treaty, William J. Bryan, of Nebraska, ex-colonel of a Nebraska regiment, appealed to those in the Senate with whom his personal influence would be the strongest to vote for ratification. One of the men was a Senator from his own State, who had been theretofore counted as against the treaty, and who suddenly turned over and voted for its ratification, and caused its ratification by the bare majority his vote secured. So the party whose great leader did this cannot afford, in 1900, to condemn the administration of the Republican party for having entered upon this new field in its foreign policy. At the door of the present Populist candidate for President, William J. Bryan, lies more of the sin, if it be a sin, more of the honor, if it be an honor, more of the glory, if it be a glory, of having secured the ratification of the Treaty of Paris and the assimilation of the Philippines and Porto Rico into the property and territory of the United States than lies at the door of any other one living man.

But this same Populist candidate for the Presidency says that the trusts will be an issue; and, among other things in his article in the June number of the *NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW*, he says:

"The Democratic party is better able to undertake this work (the overthrow of the trusts) now than it was a few years ago, because all the trust magnates have left the party. The Republican party is less able than ever before to make a successful war against the trusts, because it numbers among its membership all the trust magnates it ever had, and in addition it has all the Democratic party formerly had."

Presumably, this eloquent paragraph was written before it was suddenly discovered that some of the great "magnates" of Tammany Hall, including the Mayor of the City of New York, were members of the Ice Trust of New York City. Doubtless, if the Populist candidate for President had this paragraph to rewrite, he would add at the end of it in parenthesis, "excepting New York City and New York State."

In this connection, it may be proper to refer to the fact that Mr. Bryan has reproduced a line of argument which has been exhausted heretofore many times, tending to show that the tariff is the promoter of trusts, and he states that "the high tariff has been a bulwark to the trusts." I presume that, if any intelligent American citizen should be called upon for an illustration of the most successful and most dominating combination of capital in the United States, he would select the Standard Oil Trust or Company, as the case may be. Then, in studying the tariff laws of the country, it would be discovered that there is no such thing as a tariff on the product out of which this enormous corporation has grown rich. Now, whether Mr. Bryan, the Populist candidate, when he said that "the high tariff has been a bulwark to the trusts," labored under the impression that there is a tariff on ice, of course we shall never know; but the two illustrations, the Standard Oil and the Ice Trust, operate as complete refutations to the whole of the absurd theory promulgated by him.

A few words on the subject of trusts. There is not a more efficient statute on the statute books of the United States than the Sherman anti-trust law, which was placed there by a Republican Congress, signed by a Republican President, and, after having lain dormant during an entire four years of Democratic administration under Mr. Cleveland, was put into active force by a Republican Attorney General and a Republican administration. Under its operations, the great combinations and railroad interests, East and West, were broken up and destroyed; and under it the doctrine was established by the Supreme Court of the United States that substantially makes it impossible for trusts to manufacture goods in this country for interstate commerce without violating the law of Congress. It will be noticed that the Democratic arguments of denunciation against trusts are usually unaccompanied by any suggestion of a remedy, and the most that is suggested in this article to which I have referred so often is that Congress should be authorized to control, modify, limit, and, if necessary, destroy the industrial corporations created by State authority. A provision of this character was brought into Congress at the recent session, in the form of a constitutional amendment, and practically in the very form and essence of Mr. Bryan's proposition; and it was defeated by almost the solid vote of the Democrats on the floor of the House. So far from the Republi-

can party being unfitted to deal with the trust question, it is the only party that has ever done anything toward the limitation and destruction of injurious trusts. It was the Republican party that enacted the Sherman Anti-Trust Law, which was sneered at by the Democrats. It was a Democratic Attorney-General who pronounced the law ineffective and refused to prosecute under it. It was a Republican Administration that took up the law, and made it so effective as to break up two of the greatest trust combinations ever formed on this continent; and by a recent decision of the Supreme Court that law, thus condemned by the Democrats, has been held to be effective even in the matter of the manufacture by trusts of commodities for interstate commerce. But the Republican party has never lost its head upon the subject of trusts. These mighty industries, which to-day are making this country powerful in all the markets of the world, have grown up out of conditions that are inherent and natural to the progress, development and evolution of trade and commerce. No frantic appeal of the demagogue can drive the Republican party to the insanity of overthrowing the industrial institutions of this country, in consideration for any temporary gain that might come to it from such a course. The interests of the people of this country in this matter of trusts are safely confided to the Republican party. The intense loyalty of the Republican party to the people of the country and its record hitherto, justify that confidence.

One of the issues of the coming campaign which will be presented by the Republicans is the issue of the re-election of William McKinley. He was elected President of the United States in a campaign, the issues of which were purely domestic, and of common knowledge and common discussion. The tariff, the financial condition of the country, and the minor suggestions of the platform were all subjects about which we had had discussion from time immemorial. The great prominence of Mr. McKinley in tariff debate and tariff legislation pointed him out conclusively as the proper candidate; but there were very few people in the United States who understood the size of the man and the capabilities of the man, when they elected him President. More than three years of his Administration have passed. During that time questions of greater moment have arisen than were ever presented to any Administration of our government hitherto. He has ap-

pointed more men to office, civil and military, far more, than did any predecessor of his; and to-day, notwithstanding the new conditions and new offices that have been filled, it would puzzle the most virulent Democrat to point to five bad appointments that he has made. He has filled many of the great judicial offices of the country, and he has sent abroad an army of office holders. Who can criticise justly the character of those appointments? Little did the people of the United States think, when McKinley took his seat as President, that we would shortly be plunged into a great war; and yet we were and we found ourselves substantially without army or munitions. We raised an army of a quarter of a million, and equipped it with the best of every kind of war material and sent it into the field, organized and commanded by a corps of officers equal to those of any other nation in the world; and, inside of one hundred and ten days, we had conquered Spain on land and sea, had destroyed her navy, and she was on her knees begging for quarter.

New issues have arisen, more trying and more novel and more difficult of solution than ever before confronted a President of the United States. Abraham Lincoln was confronted with the single question of his duty to overthrow rebellion and save the Union; but here have thronged upon the Administration innumerable questions—questions of constitutional construction, questions of the power of the President at home and abroad, questions of the relation of the annexed islands to the United States. All these questions have been met by the Administration and practically solved in the interest of our country and of the countries thus being assimilated. No such power was ever in the hands of a human being, within the two past centuries, as has been placed in the hands of William McKinley. Not only has it been his duty, under the Constitution, to enforce the laws of Congress and of the country at home, but he has found himself possessed of power without limitation. He has found himself making decisions regarding questions of enormous import where there was no court of appeal, and yet it may be stated with absolute confidence that there has been no act of his that savored of tyranny, oppression, wrong or indifference to duty or failure to do justice to all. He has been governed and controlled in his actions and decisions by the spirit of the Constitution and the suggestions of our civilization. To him it has not been important whether

the Constitution goes to the islands *ex proprio vigore*, or not, so far as his action has been concerned. Every guaranty of the Constitution in favor of liberty, justice, fair play, equal rights has been the guiding star of his Administration. No man has been wronged in his rights of property, of liberty or the enjoyment of any of the things and qualities guaranteed to the American citizen by the Constitution, though he may have been the resident of a distant island and been, in fact, a savage unlearned, and incapable of defending his own rights.

This is one of the issues of the campaign, the re-election of William McKinley. Will the people of the United States, crossing this mighty river of constitutional construction and constitutional application, "swap horses," to use a homely illustration of Abraham Lincoln? The Republican party will insist that this man, who has been tried and never found wanting, shall be continued in the Presidential office, while the country is passing through the trials and difficulties which will beset us during the next four years.

CHARLES HENRY GROSVENOR.